

ABSTRACT

To satisfy a quality required for each traffic and perform switching for a packet segmented into cells without packet reassembly, there is provided a node apparatus including a header processing section (2) for determining an output destination of an incoming packet and a quality class from the header information of the packet, a route table (3), and a quality description table (4), and storing the packet in an output queue (6) determined by the determined output destination and quality class, an output control section (7) for reading out a packet from the output queue in accordance with the quality set for each output queue (6) and sending out the read packet through a VC determined by the determined output destination and quality class, and a quality description table (4) which has at least a virtual dedicated network number field, a destination address/mask length field, a source address/mask length field, a fourth-layer protocol/destination port number field, and a destination port number field and in which each field is made blank when any value can be set. In the node apparatus, a packet segmented into cells and arriving from each input VC is temporarily stored in a packet queue (26) corresponding to each input VC. When the final cell of the packet arrives, 1-packet cells are moved altogether to an output queue (27) corresponding to the destination IP address contained in the start cell and output to a corresponding output VC by an output section (28).